(a) whether in a bid to accelerate tourism growth the proposal of World Travel and Tourism Council is under consideration of Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the expected time by which the proposal is likely to be considered?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI ANANTHKUMAR): (a) Ministry of Tourism has not received any specific proposal from the World Travel and Tourism Council.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Expansion of Tourism Infrastructure

1344. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for the arrival of foreign tourists in 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000;

(b) the actual number of foreign tourists who came to the country in these years;

(c) the year-wise and sector-wise break up thereof;

(d) the efforts made by Government to expand infrastructure facilities to attract more number of foreign tourists in coming years; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI ANANTHKUMAR): (a) to (c) The objective of the Govt. is to promote tourism & to increase the tourist inflow in the country. No year-wise targets as such are fixed. However, the actual number of foreign tourists who visited this country during the year 1997, 1998 & 1999 are as follows:—

Year	Actual Foreign Tourist Arrivals (Million)
1997	2.37
1998	2.36
1999	2.48

(d) and (e) Various efforts made by the Government to expand infrastructure facilities to attract more number of foreign tourist include central financial

assistance to the State Govts/U.T. Govts. for the development of tourist infrastructure including construction of tourist complex, way-side amenities, Yatri Niwas etc. and encouraging private investment in the tourism sector including hotels by providing various incentives like tax exemption, interest subsidy, concessional custom duty on import, etc. During the year 1998-99, 298 projects/schemes have been identified for an amount of Rs. 7887.02 Lakhs for the development of infrastructure facilities.

Arrival of Tourists in North-Eastern States

1345. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of foreign tourists who visited the tourist places of the country particularly the NE States during the last three years;

(b) the total amount of foreign exchange earned therefrom; and

(c) the steps being taken to expand tourist facilities to the visitors of NER?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI ANANTHKUMAR): (a) Total number of foreign tourists who visited India during the last three years is as follows:

Year	Actual Foreign Tourist Arrivals (Million)
1997	2.37
1998	2.36
1999	2.48

According to the statistics available from the State Governments, the estimated number of foreign tourists who visited the NE States for the last three years is as follows:

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals in North Eastern States
1997	12289
1998	12413
1999	13084

(b) The estimated foreign exchange earnings from tourism during the last three years is as follows: